

VZCZCXRO2061
PP RUEHTRO
DE RUEHTRO #0584/01 2031018
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 211018Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3704
INFO RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT 0666
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 0554
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 0720
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 1155
RUEHVT/AMEMBASSY VALLETTA 0325
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0455
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0550
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0869
RUEHMK/AMEMBASSY MANAMA 0006
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 4214

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TRIPOLI 000584

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/MAG (JOHNSON) AND ISN/CPI (MCGEEHAN)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 7/21/2018

TAGS: [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [EINV](#) [ETRD](#) [PTER](#) [KCOR](#) [PGOV](#) [KBIO](#) [LY](#)

SUBJECT: LIBYAN FOREIGN BANK - PRIMED FOR EXPANSION

REF: A) GODFREY-MCKEEHAN EMAIL 7/15/2008, B) TRIPOLI 214, C) TRIPOLI 230, D) TRIPOLI 126, E) TRIPOLI 199, F) TRIPOLI 227

CLASSIFIED BY: John T. Godfrey, CDA, U.S. Embassy - Tripoli, Dept of State. REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: The Libyan Foreign Bank (LFB), Libya's longtime conduit for international trade, is pursuing a substantial program of expansion.

[1](#)2. (SBU) CDA and Econoff met with Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Bayt Almal, Chairman of the Libyan Foreign Bank (formerly known as the Libyan Arab Foreign Bank).

[1](#)3. (C) CDA asked about press reports detailing recent initiatives made by Bahrain-based Alubaf Arab International Bank. Bayt Almal confirmed the bank is diversifying & seeking a presence in the U.S.

[1](#)4. (SBU) The LFB's foreign interests are diverse and growing. It currently has "participation" (i.e., interests) in thirty-seven foreign entities.

LAND HO: MOVING ONSHORE

[1](#)5. (SBU) Bayt Almal said that the LFB planned to open an onshore bank in Libya soon, contingent on approval by its parent institution, the Central Bank of Libya, as part of the AL-QADHAFI'S PROPOSED GOVERNMENT REFORMS - "FORM OVER SUBSTANCE"

[1](#)6. (C) Responding to a question about expected privatization and government restructuring stemming from Muammar al-Qadhafi's dramatic speech on July 15, 2008.

[1](#)7. (C) Biographical Note: Bayt Almal was born in Egypt in 1948 and spent his childhood in Benghazi, despite the fact that his family originates from Tripoli.